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/The King Vultures Society, a man's society based upon nomination from without the Ramokamekra tribe as "courtesy chief" is listed under category 794, since the functions of the group are magical but they do not constitute an organized priesthood. When acting as individuals, they are categorized as 791./

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224 killed, but sought only for lack of all other game. Because of its reputed destruction
[23] of snakes the people like to keep it tame in the village. Though I have never observed these birds at this, a tame specimen once gave me a demonstration of its procedure when mistaking my leather belt, which had accidentally dropped, for a snake. Furiously pouncing on the strap, the sariema[1] seized the buckle with its bill, swung it in the air, and lashed it two or three times against the ground in a manner that would inevitably have cracked a snake's spine. Only then did the attacker recognize
223 its error and let the belt alone. Falcons are killed in large numbers when the steppe grass is burnt in June and these birds immediately foregather in order to hunt the startled grasshoppers, lizards, and other small species. Falcons are sought both for their flesh and their downy feathers, which play a great part in Eastern Timbira ceremonial.

224 Snakes are killed with any handy stick, except that a sucurijú, which has the thickness of a human thigh, requires a sizable club.

483 Game of agouti size, or larger, is carried home in a palm-leaf basket plaited *ad hoc*. First the hunter plaits the back of the container, deposits the animal on it, and then interlaces the leaflets over it. The tip of a monkey's tail is pulled through its lower jaw and the game is then hung over's one shoulder. A man will tie together a deer's feet, put his head through the ring thus formed, and carry his kill home on his back.

462 The Rąmkõ'kamekra, too, as noted by Snethlage,[m] drags large game no farther than the village boundary, whence his wife carries it home.

224 In general the Timbira are still skillful at hunting, exhibiting marked ability to
581 interpret footprints and great perseverance in pursuing wounded animals. A good hunter is prized all the more nowadays because lack of game renders the chase progressively less productive. He is a much coveted husband: I once overheard a Rąmkõ'kamekra reproving his infatuated niece as follows, "You want to marry *him!* What sort of game has *he* ever shot?"

224 Collective hunting accompanies the festivals, especially the period preceding the
527 terminal celebration, which always requires a large quantity of meat pies. Since
561 this closing ceremony is determined by the council when the duration of the festival is deemed sufficient, this decision likewise involves the signal for collective hunting. This devolves exclusively on the festive societies and age classes that participated in the festival. Each group is accompanied by the two associated girl auxiliaries, who are sometimes joined by several female age mates, especially of the "wanton" class. At least one man of more mature age invariably goes along in order to advise the younger people and to see to the preservation of ceremonial rules. He has the prerogative of eating the brains of animals killed, this diet being tabooed to the young people. The oldest woman of the society—contrary to Snethlage's observation—does not dream of permitting herself to be loaded down with kitchen utensils
[887] to be brought to the hunters' assembly. Old women calmly wait in the village for whatever food their sons or sons-in-law are morally obliged to bring them. I am further puzzled by the function of the cords and ropes (both of tucum fiber) with which, according to the same investigator, every hunter provides himself.

224 In the collective hunting trips, too, the tamhą'k (p. 98) play a part, attempting
791 to increase the yield of the undertaking by first performing certain actions. Indeed they even tried to improve the quality of the slain game by their magical influence. If animals were to be surrounded with the aid of firing, a tamhą'k had to be the first to light the fire. He and his fellows, however, did not take part in the ensuing drive.

[m] Meine Reise, 165.

1 [i.e. the sariema --- Analyst]

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but remained standing aloof. But after the spoils had been piled up, a tamhą'k went there to select a portion for himself and his fellow members, and they then distributed it among themselves.

If the hunting party had killed a tapir, all persons within reach gathered round the carcass, and an old man selected as vigorous a young tamhą'k as could be found. The man chosen set off his occipital hair by tying in the manner explained, and painted the oral region with charcoal powder; whereupon the old man stuck a wad of cotton between the tamhą'k's lips. For evisceration the beast was laid, belly up, on palm leaves, then a knife was ground and put on the game. The tamhą'k stepped up, seized the knife, slowly made a single downward incision in the skin, cutting chest and belly, and redeposited the blade. The object of this performance was to render the tapir fat when dissected. The old man thereupon handed the animal's liver to one of the tamhą'k's relatives, who had a pie, ku'kú'ti, prepared from it, which the young men brought to the elders in the plaza.

The killer of a jaguar screamed beside the carcass until one of his hunting companions approached, took away the hunter's weapon, whether bow or gun, and gave him his own in exchange. The hunter distributed the skin among the bravest men, who used it for armlets on their upper arms.

The sun is considered the protector of game animals, which are thus commended to his care: Of a late afternoon an old man summoned the men to form a circle round him in the plaza. He stood resting on a stick, faced east, turning his back to the solar disk, and prayed: "Kédeti imą̃ prire kuna yamãke imą̃ katí vakokú rųitó a'nã ató impey!" Approximately this means: "May the Grandfather [sun] protect all beasts so they grow up and can be eaten by man." Then the suppliant successively enumerated the long series of species whose welfare he commended to the sun.

Fishing

Fishing is but slightly developed among the Timbira. Its economic insignificance has been noted by Snethlage, too.[29] Even with tribes like the Kre'pų'mkateye and the Timbira of Araparytíua, who live directly on the banks of sizable rivers, fishing plays a subordinate role. As for the steppe Timbira, the brooks near their settlements furnish only small fish in moderate quantities, so that a family could hardly ever eat its fill from the produce of a catch. Fishing was naturally eliminated for the Krĩkatí, who dipped up their water supply from water holes. However, in special cases certain small species form the prescribed diet.

Fish are secured by shooting with arrows (pl. 16, *h*, *i*), with a line, and (after drugging) with a scoop net (pl. 17, *c*). Fish spears and anchored nets are lacking, as are basketry traps and the "pari" traps frequent among the Tupí tribes and also found among the Apinayé. The fish arrows are sometimes, but not as a rule, without feathers. They are generally marked by the greater length of their gynerium shafts and bear simple barbed points. Harpoon darts and arrows with several points are unknown.

Tradition does not report aboriginal fishhooks. Those now in use are of iron, mostly from North America, and are designated by the term ỹyó, derived from Portuguese *anzol*. The Indians themselves manufacture the line from tucum fiber. Angling devolves mainly on the children, women, and old men.

The Rąmkõ'kamekra poison fish with the plant now cultivated by them and called kalón by the Timbira, the tinguy of the Neobrazilians, from whom the Indians borrowed it. Another fish drug, less used at present, but in my opinion

[29] Nordostbras. Ind., 160.

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aboriginal, is the forest creeper the Timbira call ha'kró, the Neobrazilians timbó. The Indians tear it out with the roots, then wash off the earth, and tap the root on a log with an appropriate stick so as to separate the fibers. While some rinse the fiber balls in the water of the creek, others wait downstream in order to seize with their hands the stupefied fish as they drift along, or spit them on arrows, or catch the smaller fry with a scoop net, krį, this last being a conical net mounted on a hoop without a handle. My reason for regarding it as aboriginal is that, while lacking among both the Guajajára and Neobrazilians, it appears in the same form with the identical designation among the Eastern (Rąmkõ'kamekra, Pụkóbye, Kre'pụ'mkateye) and Western Timbira. The small fish are collected in gourd bowls or little baskets, the larger ones are ranged on special cords, tepčečą, with a wooden tip at one end and a transverse stick at the other (fig. 6).

In drugging fish, too, they like to select a young tamhą'k, who is the first to enter the water when the stupefied fish begin to appear, while the other Indians wait on

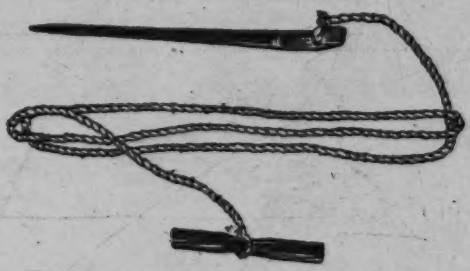

Fig. 6. Cord for stringing fish. Approx. ½ nat. size.

the bank. He spits the first three fish on his arrow, signalling for each by a shout, to which the others respond by screaming and the blowing of trumpets. Then he leaves the water and hands the fish to an old man, while everyone starts gathering the spoils.

Gathering

Gathering is indissolubly linked with nomadic or seminomadic life. Farmers in a restricted territory, like the present Timbira, cannot gather in the steppe with any measure of profit.

However, though this source of food has shrunk almost to the insignificance of fishing through the progress of agriculture and the restriction of the habitat, the Rąmkõ'kamekra still pray to the sun to protect the steppe fruits and let them grow to gladden men's hearts. This is done somewhat differently than in the corresponding prayer for game, though in almost identical words. The speaker was the oldest man of the entire tribe. He went to the plaza in the morning, rested one knee on the ground, stretched out an empty gourd bowl toward the sun, and said, "Kédeti imã ampó čo yamã ke imã hokati vayakrį'."

Before rice and manioc flour were available, when the tribal territory was about twenty times its present extent, the gathering of steppe and *galeria* fruits was perhaps proportionately greater. Ribeiro,[38] who evidently observed the Timbira with special frequency during their migratory period, enumerates the following among their wild fruits:

[38] Memoria, § 11.